



Arlington Disability Commission Minutes

Date: Wednesday, April 19, 2023

Time: 4:00pm

Location: Conducted by Hybrid Participation

Attendees: Grace Carpenter, Kerrie Fallon, Michael Rademacher, Paul Raia

Guests: Tim Ross, Jonathan Spiller

Absent: Cynthia DeAngelis, Ileana Gatica, Paul Parravano

Agenda

1. Call to Order, Read Ground Rules, Welcome (5 min)
2. Ground rules (2 min)
 - a. [Please don't use Zoom chat/messaging during the meeting, unless that is your primary way to participate in a meeting. The co-chairs have disabilities that make it hard to deal with Zoom chat/messaging]
3. Approve Draft March Meeting Minutes (2 min)
 - a. Tabled to next month
4. Budget Presentation (30 min)
 - a. Tabled for May – Christine Bongiorno on vacation
5. ADA Compliance Report (10 min)
 - a. Joan Roman and Janna Settembre presented their ADA Town Website report to discuss how the Town has improved accessibility on the website.
6. 99 Mass Ave (5 min)
 - a. Inspectional Services issued the building permit for this ramp months before an application for a special permit was submitted to the Arlington Redevelopment Board. IS offices required multiple meetings with the contractor and architect for this project, as they had several concerns with the ramp drawings they had submitted. This part of the project is incomplete and has not received a final inspection. The final approval of the ramp will only occur once the ramp is compliant with 521 CMR, the Architectural Access Board Regulations, or the Architectural Access Board grants a variance.
 - b. Inspectional Services is the Authority Having Jurisdiction over the review, inspections, and enforcement of 521 CMR. In the future, any concerns related to these regulations should be directed to this office.
 - c. Carpenter brought up how the commission should have a liaison to ARB/ZBA.
 - d. Rademacher stated we should draft a letter to legal so we can get clarification of ARB/ZBA/ISD for compliance.
 - e. 1500 Mass Ave – 3 story building being put up, office space on first floor then 2 residential floors above. Approved by Redevelopment board 2 years ago, parking lot was on level with Mass Ave and fully accessible to front of building.

Partway through project, excavating proved to be difficult to reduce parking space to 5 compact spaces and raise level so the sloped ramps are no longer accessible.

7. ARB vs. ZBA vs Inspectional Services (10 min)
8. Resources & Connections Fair (5 min)
 - a. Jonathan expressed interested
 - b. Reviewed R&C
9. ACMI Disability Commission short videos (5 min)
 - a. Partner with ACMI to put out monthly videos.
 - b. Reach ACMI
10. Open Spaces Plan 2022-2029 (10 min)
 - a. David Morgan has identified some action items in the Open Space and Rec Plan (2022-2029) to work with the Disability Commission on.
 - i. Action Item 2.B.7. – Improve accessibility to the Bikeway and its use by people with disabilities, particularly as part of 2.B.5. (increase safety and accessibility of Bikeway). Examples of improvements could include adaptive equipment for rent at the Bikeway, adaptive cycle storage, and safer and more accessible access points and Bikeway crossings.
 - ii. 2.C.2. – Prioritize improvements and new amenities in environmental justice communities (EJ Census Tracts and CDBG eligible Brock Groups.
 - iii. 2.D.1. – Employ universal design principles to increase accessibility when upgrading playing fields, playgrounds, and other recreational facilities, prioritizing those highlighted in the Field and Playground Feasibility Study and Arlington Parks Playground Assessment and Recommendation Report.
 - iv. 2.D.2. – Continue to work with the DC to address barriers for people with disabilities at existing recreation facilities, conservation areas, and other public spaces. Improvements include:
 1. Increasing HP spots, including for vans, and their visibility near the entrances to major parks or recreational facilities.
 2. Creating more accessible paths with interpretive signage (braille, QR codes) and seating (benches, picnic tables).
 3. Providing more accessible gardening options and equipment.
 4. Incorporating accessible playground equipment and structures that expand opportunities for all ages, abilities, and languages.
11. 2023 Retreat (5 min)
 - a. Raia in favor.
 - b. Fallon mentioned a retreat would be good to plan for the year ahead and reconnect in a physical space. Makes the commission more effective.
 - c. Carpenter mentioned at the last CODA meeting, Cambridge has a professionally facilitated retreat.
 - d. Rademacher stated we can use a meeting time as a retreat like meeting where we focus on one topic at a time.
12. Correspondences (5 min)
 - a. Resident with 46y/o daughter with William's Syndrome, looking for 1 on 1 social support for her daughter.
 - i. Johnathan does consulting with Pathways to Friendship, people with disabilities get paired up with buddies ARC MASS.
 - b. Resident with adult daughter w/ Down Syndrome and ASD. Daughter is not receiving level of care for her disability status.

13. Subcommittee reports (10 minutes)

- a. DEI
 - i. DC newsletter test has gone out to commissioners.
 - 1. Fallon noted we could include brief introductions to commissioners, a few sentences about why they joined the commission.
 - 2. Raia stated it's important for the commission to not only advocate but educate.
 - ii. Commission interviews tentatively scheduled for 5/3.
- b. DPW
 - i. Improvements on Chestnut Street, specifically two crosswalks. Town hired consultant to design crosswalks and bumpouts. Scope expanded into HP spots and ramps near Medford Street. Estimated to be finished in 4-6 weeks.
 - ii. Ongoing design at Mass Ave/Appleton. Original scope was to improve intersection. Scope has expanded to include businesses and abutters which is causing delays.
 - iii. Annual street, sidewalk, and HP ramp work will be posted to DPW website when ready.
 - iv. There is a way to grind sidewalk obstructions down, this happened in front of Blue Ribbon BBQ.
 - 1. Identify areas and send to Tim/Mike to add to list.
- c. Remote Meeting Study
 - i. Tabled for next month.
- d. Recreation
 - i. McClennen Park – Improvements to Little League Field
 - 1. Tim to verify with Joe about drainage/pooling
 - 2. Tim to check with Joe about next Robbins Farm park meeting (specifically HP spot inclusion)

14. Public Comment

- a. Don Seltzer here to comment on 99 Mass Ave and 1500 Mass Ave. Claims ADA issues are ignored by ARB or ZBA, and leave everything up to ISD. Says since ARB approves special permit ISD allows variance. Board spent a lot of time on bicycle parking but not HP parking. 3 story commercial building with 4th floor being added for housing. Since they have spent so much money on construction it triggered a law that requires the entire building to be ADA compliant.
- b. Paul R states we can call on the state to investigate for ADA compliance. Wonders if state can halt construction if not compliant?
- c. Rademacher stated that ISD has halted construction, so the process is working.
- d. Don Seltzer stated that the issue is that construction gets too far and it then becomes too expensive to get to ADA compliance.
- e. Don stated ISD will not enforce federal ADA and fair housing laws.
- f. Rademacher stated that ARB is stricter than federal in most cases.

15. Next meeting Wednesday May 17, 2023 at 4PM

16. Closing

Commission members not able to attend please email dei@town.arlington.ma.us prior to the scheduled meeting.

Anyone needing accessibility information or other assistance in order to attend this meeting

should contact dei@town.arlington.ma.us. This meeting is open to all interested individuals.